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Chairman: Mr. Macedo ..... (Mexico)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 85: Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects (A/53/127 and A/C.4/53/L.8)

1. **The Chairman** drew the attention of Committee members to the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (A/53/127) and to the draft resolution contained in document A/C.4/53/L.8.

2. **Mr. Zaki** (Egypt), speaking as the Rapporteur of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, introduced the report of the Special Committee, and said that the cornerstone of the report remained its assertion that the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security lay with the United Nations and that peacekeeping continued to be one of the key instruments available to it in discharging that responsibility.

3. Concerning the implementation of mandates, the Special Committee had emphasized the need for clearly defined mandates, objectives and command structures, as well as secure funding. The Special Committee had also addressed the ways in which it felt that changes of mandate needed to be handled.

4. On the issue of consultations involving troop-contributing countries, prospective troop contributors, the Security Council and the Secretariat, the Special Committee had urged all parties concerned to make full use of the arrangements in place. It had also encouraged the Security Council to take steps more formally to ensure the rigorous, timely and systematic implementation of those arrangements.

5. Within the issue of enhancing capacity, the Special Committee had distinguished such aspects as personnel, organization, planning and coordination, security, training, standby arrangements and rapid deployment, civilian police and financing.

6. In the section concerning personnel matters, there were references to the need for expeditious phase-out of gratis personnel in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) while maintaining operational capacity, and to the importance of expediting the staff recruitment process on a broad geographical basis. The Committee had also urged the enhancement of efforts to improve the selection, recruitment and preparation of senior military commanders, civilian police commissioners and chief administrative officers. An important innovation in the report had been the Committee's request concerning testimony of peacekeepers before international criminal tribunals. It had encouraged the Secretariat to provide information on the procedures that should be applied in such cases, and develop guidelines for the application of such procedures.

7. With regard to organization, planning and coordination of the Department's activities, the Committee had deemed that a more fundamental review was required of its organization, structure and staffing. In the same context, the Committee had addressed such issues as the role and functions of special representatives of the Secretary-General, the recent efforts in military-civilian coordination, the importance of timely, efficient, transparent and cost-effective procurement and the broadening of both the procurement roster and the range of procurement information available. In that connection, the Committee had addressed issues of progress on a coherent and comprehensive concept for logistical support. It commended the exceptional efforts in the development of the new field assets control system.

8. In the section on safety and security, the Committee had condemned the acts perpetrated against peacekeepers and urged the ratification of the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel.

9. With regard to training of personnel, the Committee had underlined the valuable role that the United Nations should play in addition to the primary role of Member States. It had referred specifically to the United Nations facilities in that field and the full use that should be made of them, as well as the importance of training materials.

10. In examining the question of civilian police and noting their increasing role and participation in peacekeeping operations, the Committee had emphasized that police and military tasks must be clearly differentiated; civilian police elements must be fully integrated into peacekeeping planning; the Secretariat must develop draft guidelines on general principles; Member States must enhance their national recruitment procedures with a view to ensuring the highest quality in deployment, and the Civilian Police Unit must be strengthened.

11. On the subject of standby arrangements and rapid deployment, the Committee had emphasized that the United Nations should be able rapidly to deploy a peacekeeping operation on the adoption of an authorizing mandate by the Security Council. The Committee had underscored its support for such arrangements, while also noting the continued lack of certain key resources for its adequate functioning.

12. With regard to finances, the Committee had urged that measures should be taken to achieve further progress on such issues as reimbursement of government expenses, liquidation of completed operations, and contingent-owned equipment

leases. It had also expressed satisfaction at the results achieved in areas ranging from the uniformity of death and disability compensation to the acceleration in the clearing of claims.

13. The remaining section of the report concentrated on cooperation with regional arrangements and agencies, acknowledged their important contribution in maintaining security and stability and urged the strengthening of cooperation with them. It devoted particular attention to the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the question of strengthening its institutional capacity, and the Committee encouraged the Secretary-General's intention to hold periodic meetings on that issue.

14. **Mr. Miyet** (Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations) said that the United Nations had recently held a solemn ceremony on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of peacekeeping at which a draft declaration had been adopted commemorating those who had served in peacekeeping operations and the first Dag Hammarskjöld medals had been awarded. That event had reaffirmed the unflagging commitment of Member States to joint work and cooperation with the Secretariat in the cause of peace. It had provided a real stimulus to all those who, as members of police forces, military contingents and observers — nearly 14,500 persons in all — were currently serving the international community, courageously and unselfishly, in conflict zones around the world.

15. From time to time in recent years it had been suggested that United Nations peacekeeping activities were in decline. The view had also been expressed that the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security could more appropriately be transferred to the regional,. subregional and multinational levels. The Secretariat noted with satisfaction the peacekeeping efforts undertaken at those levels and had, in several cases, cooperated closely in their realization. Nevertheless, in keeping with the spirit and letter of Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations, the Organization must remain the cornerstone of the maintenance of international peace and security. A new awareness was spreading of the advantages that the Organization had in that sphere, and such a trend could only be regarded as highly positive. It was increasingly recognized that the United Nations, for both political and practical reasons, played an irreplaceable role. Its operations constituted a legitimate form of outside intervention, made it possible to reconcile opposing points of view and offered a means of resolving local issues by focusing the attention of the international community on them.

16. The past year had been marked by both successes and failures. Threats had been made against members of missions, hostage-taking incidents had occurred and, tragically, both the military and the civilian contingents had suffered losses. In June, a tragic air crash had claimed the lives of Mr. Alioune Blondin Beye, five of his colleagues and two pilots. In July, four peacekeepers had been brutally and deliberately murdered in Tajikistan. Unfortunately, many other such tragic events had taken place. That had not, however, prevented the deployment, by decision of the Security Council, of two new peacekeeping missions: the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCA), which had undoubtedly played a positive and stabilizing role in a region now so troubled, and the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL). The latter was a new example of constructive support by the United Nations for efforts undertaken at the subregional and regional levels to restore legitimate State institutions and stabilize the situation in the country and the subregion. Recently, the operation in Croatia had been concluded successfully; a portion of the responsibilities previously carried out by a civilian police contingent of the United Nations Temporary Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES) had been transferred to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). That example could serve as a model of cooperation between the United Nations and OSCE. United Nations peacekeeping operations, of which there were now 16, had played a decisive role in the past year in the international community's efforts on behalf of peace, and there was no doubt that they would continue to do so in the future.

17. With regard to the specific recommendations contained in the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, he noted that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations had prepared a draft report on efforts to enhance African peacekeeping capacity, and was initiating consultations with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in order to finalize the text. In terms of long-term efforts to enhance African peacekeeping capacity, a training strategy was being developed in cooperation with Member States; it was hoped that a working group could be formed, composed of representatives of African and non-African States directly involved in the provision of training assistance. The Department had offered to serve, in close cooperation with OAU, as the focal point for the collection and dissemination of information on African capacity for peacekeeping and intended to post such information on the Internet by the end of the year.

18. The follow-up to the Secretary-General's report on Africa would continue so as to ensure that the declaration of political support made at two ministerial-level meetings of the Security Council was reflected in tangible, practical ways.

19. Real progress in that area would depend upon close cooperation with Member States and the allocation of the necessary resources; in that connection, he strongly encouraged Member States to explore ways of promoting that process, including through contributions to the United Nations trust fund established for that purpose.

20. The Department had given special attention to the emerging role of civilian police in peacekeeping operations, which represented a new dimension of the efforts to respond effectively to the complex problems posed by civil conflict. Nevertheless, the conceptual basis for the use of police forces had not yet been worked out. The seminar on the issue convened by the Department, the report of which had been circulated to all Member States, had made it possible to initiate a thorough study of the question. Following the seminar, certain Member States had shown interest in pursuing consideration of the issue, including through follow-up seminars and practical studies. Nevertheless, general principles concerning the role of civilian police had yet to be elaborated.

21. The Department was continuing to promote the highest standards of efficiency in all areas of activity, particularly in the administrative, logistical and financial fields. The smooth and timely deployment of MINURCA was evidence of the improved capacity of the Field Administration and Logistics Division to deploy the troops required to start up a mission within a very short period of time. Moreover, in response to the concerns expressed by the Secretary-General and in recognition of the complex demands of field service, the Department was reinforcing its guidelines to ensure that all peacekeepers were of an appropriate age and had appropriate experience. The Department would ask that civilian police and military observers younger than 25 years not be sent to serve in peacekeeping operations. Furthermore, national contingent soldiers should preferably be 21 years of age, and definitely not under 18, when deployed in United Nations peacekeeping operations. That policy should also serve as an example for police and military forces worldwide at a time when too many children were being recruited to participate in armed conflicts, which was unacceptable.

22. As urged by the Special Committee, the phasing out of gratis personnel was under way and proceeding rapidly. An expedited process of recruitment, with due regard to geographical representation and gender balance, had begun, in order to minimize disruption during the transition period. With regard to gender balance, some difficulties had arisen: of the total of 1,077 applications, only 30 had been from women. However, there had been an increase in women at the senior levels in the field. One Special Representative of the Secretary-General was a woman, as were one deputy Special Representative and one deputy Head of Mission. There was still a long way to go, but the process was moving in the right direction. In its report, the Special Committee had stressed the need to provide adequate funding for appropriate posts. In that context, he noted that the General Assembly had approved 55 additional posts for the Department, of which 48 represented conversions of gratis positions, and had recommended redeployment of 23 posts.

23. The financial and administrative arrangements agreed to over the past five years had been used to build an effective tool to cope with new challenges. However, it should be noted that there was no automatic proportionate relation between the total numbers of personnel in peacekeeping operations or figures for the budget, on one hand, and Headquarters requirements on the other. The number of peacekeeping operations being planned and conducted, rather than the number of personnel deployed, determined the extent of work required. The labour necessary to prepare documents on status of forces or rules of engagement did not change according to the number of military person[illegible]. At the same time, the trend towards smaller operations having a greater proportion of specialized units, military observers and police meant that today's missions required greater per capita administrative and logistic support than when the number of persons deployed had been at its peak.

24. The Department was continuing to review the implications of the General Assembly's decision. However, it should be remembered that the substantial net decline in staffing would inevitably affect the Department's capacity to discharge effectively the duties assigned to it, although it would do its best to alleviate those consequences.

25. During the past year, certain modifications had been made in the Department's structure. The Situation Centres had been placed within the responsibility of the Office of Operations, while the Lessons Learned Unit and the Policy and Analysis Unit were being integrated. That revision of the structure of the Department took into account the experience accumulated over the past five years and responded to the constraints imposed by the phasing out of gratis personnel. The basic structure of the Department was sound, and some of the adaptations mentioned would enable it to discharge its mandated responsibilities. For

peacekeeping to reach its potential, the Secretariat and the Member States must work in partnership.

26. **Mr. Haekkerup** (Denmark) said that his country aligned itself with the statement that would be made later that day on behalf of the European Union. The United Nations could look with pride at the results of its peacekeeping activities. Over the years those activities had saved countless lives, prevented the escalation of conflicts, overseen the birth of new nations and assisted in comprehensive political solutions. The strength of peacekeeping lay in its flexibility. It was not a narrowly defined concept; there were basic rules, but they were derived from the rules upon which the Organization was founded. The weaknesses of United Nations peacekeeping were neither structural nor inherent, and its role and possibilities depended on the support and commitment of the international community.

27. It was the responsibility of Member States to provide the United Nations with the financial and human resources needed to carry out its tasks. It was also necessary to ensure that adequate mandates were given, reflecting the situation on the ground, with appropriate force structures and the necessary means to carry out a given mission.

28. Peacekeeping forces should be made up of well-trained troops, well-equipped to carry out their mission and sensitized to the problems underlying the need for their intervention. The Member States could assist in achieving those goals by expanding assistance and sharing experience in peacekeeping training and capacity-building. Thus, Denmark had helped to strengthen the peacekeeping capacity of the Baltic States.

29. Impartiality in a peacekeeping force did not mean being passive, and a peacekeeping force must be given the means to carry out its tasks. As the Secretary-General had pointed out, sometimes a convincing show of force could prevent the need for its use. Good intentions often had to be backed by such a show of force.

30. Turning to the question of unity of effort, he welcomed the fact that the Secretary-General now as a rule appointed special representatives for peacekeeping missions and that both the special representative and other key personnel were selected after a careful screening process. The special representative of the Secretary-General must be given the overall responsibility for all United Nations efforts, including the efforts of specialized agencies working in a mission area. He must also have a coordinating responsibility in relation to other international agencies and non-governmental organizations.

31. It was also necessary to reflect on the right time for the deployment of the various elements of a mission. The importance of police elements to a peacekeeping mission would grow, and it was important to choose the right phase for their deployment. A police element would be most efficient once the initial stabilization phase had ended and an operation moved towards consolidation and rebuilding. It was also necessary to pay more attention to public information, which should be an integral part of every peacekeeping mission. A public information component would be needed in order to inform both the local population and the international media.

32. More attention must be paid to civil-military cooperation. A peacekeeping mission was a joint endeavour and both the civil organizations — United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations — and the military needed to work closely together. In order to work together effectively, they must learn to understand each other, and that was a process that started well before deployment. In Danish military training and preparation for missions, cooperation with civil organizations and NGOs had been included.

33. There were situations in which the ability of the United Nations to react rapidly to a crisis once the Security Council had decided to act was far more crucial than the size of the force. The Secretary-General must be able to call on appropriately trained and immediately available standby forces from Member States. In certain situations, the ability to deploy rapidly would be the key to the success of the mission and to being able to prevent massive loss of life. The recent decision by the General Assembly on personnel for a Rapidly Deployable United Nations Mission Headquarters was a welcome development. The United Nations Standby System required further improvement, and Member States could help to shorten reaction times by establishing rapidly deployable units. They could also make preparations for cooperating in larger formations. An example of such cooperation between a broad group of countries was the formation of the United Nations Stand-by Forces High Readiness Brigade, which had been a result of the request by the Secretary-General that serious thought should be given to the idea of rapid reaction forces consisting of military units from a number of Member States, trained to the same standards and using the same operational procedures, stationed in their home countries but maintained in a high state of readiness.

34. In that connection, he drew attention to the need to develop further the preventive diplomacy and preventive deployment tool of the United Nations. The Secretary-General and the Security Council should use the possibilities

open to them to intervene in emerging crises before they became acute, and Member States must be willing and ready to support their efforts with the appropriate means of mediation, financial assistance and deployment, as necessary, of civil and military manpower. Early assistance and intervention would be much less costly in the long run both for troop-contributing nations and for the population in the crisis area.

35. **Mr. Hussein** (Jordan), speaking on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, said that the Movement had always considered United Nations peacekeeping to be an important instrument for the maintenance of international peace and security. Where conflicts were involved, however, peacekeeping could not be a substitute for a permanent solution or for addressing the underlying causes of such conflicts. It could be most useful when, as a temporary measure, it contributed to the maintenance of a ceasefire or a cessation of hostilities. Peacekeeping operations must conform strictly to the guiding principles contained in the report of the Special Committee for 1998. When establishing a new operation, the United Nations must continue to adhere to the basic principles that governed peacekeeping: the consent of the parties; the non-use of force, except in self-defence; impartiality; clearly defined mandates; and secure financing.

36. At their meeting in Durban, South Africa, from 29 August to 3 September 1998, the Heads of State or Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries had reviewed, among other issues, the question of United Nations peacekeeping. They had stressed the need for the United Nations to differentiate between peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance.

37. Where gratis personnel were concerned, the Movement remained concerned over the staffing structure of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, in which non-aligned countries were not sufficiently represented. It emphasized the importance of having the posts previously occupied by loaned personnel filled in a manner consistent with the requirements of the Charter and on as wide a geographical basis as possible.

38. There was a need to institutionalize consultations between troop-contributing countries and the Security Council. Whenever new missions were established or existing ones expanded, it was important that the Security Council should consult prospective troop contributors at the earliest possible stage. The Council should also adopt a flexible approach to the form of those consultations, which should not be limited solely to troop contributors but should include, whenever appropriate, countries especially affected and other countries from the region concerned.

39. The planning and deployment of peacekeeping operations should be exercised within the context of the United Nations Standby Arrangements System, which was open to all Member States. The Movement had noted that the System was based on contributions from individual Member States and that there was no "United Nations" standby brigade. The name "United Nations" should not be used arbitrarily by individual States or groups in their activities without a relevant United Nations resolution.

40. The Non-Aligned Movement noted the increasing use of civilian police personnel in United Nations peacekeeping operations and placed heavy emphasis on developing, at the earliest possible date, agreed guidelines on the principles governing the role of civilian police personnel in peacekeeping operations.

41. The Movement continued to feel deep concern over the continued delays on the part of the United Nations in the reimbursement of troop costs and contingent-owned equipment leases.

42. The timely, efficient, transparent and cost-effective procurement of goods and services in support of peacekeeping operations was a matter of considerable importance. In procuring goods and services of equivalent standards and prices, the United Nations should give priority to developing countries, and above all to troop-contributing countries.

43. The funding of United Nations peacekeeping operations through voluntary contributions should not influence decisions by the Security Council to create peacekeeping missions, or affect their mandates.

44. Cooperation between the United Nations and regional arrangements on agencies must abide by the letter and the spirit of Chapter VIII of the Charter, and take into account the existing instruments and mechanisms operating in each of the regional arrangements or agencies concerned.

45. Lastly, with regard to the request to the Secretary-General contained in paragraph 115 of the Special Committee's report to submit a report on progress in the implementation of the Special Committee's recommendations, he hoped that it would be done at least six weeks before the spring session so that Member States could study the Secretariat's comments thoroughly and use them as a basis for discussion at the forthcoming session.

46. **Mr. Manz** (Austria), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the central and eastern European countries associated with the European Union — the Czech Republic,

Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Romania — and the associated country Cyprus, as well as the EFTA country member of EEA Iceland, said that in the past few years, peacekeeping operations had become increasingly multidimensional. United Nations peacekeeping now encompassed not only demanding military tasks but a variety of other functions such as civilian police activities, humanitarian assistance, demining, practical disarmament measures, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, enhancing and monitoring respect for human rights, and public information.

47. The multidimensional nature of current peacekeeping operations posed new challenges to those in the field. At Headquarters, that required an effective Department of Peacekeeping Operations which was adequately structured, staffed and prepared to plan, deploy and manage a new, more complex variety of missions.

48. It was particularly important to ensure that serving military officers and civilian police possessed the required expertise. If they did not, that would have an adverse effect on peacekeeping operations. Everything possible must be done to avoid the negative consequences of that for the safety and security of peacekeeping personnel, for the professional quality and effectiveness of peacekeeping operations and for the willingness of Member States to contribute to United Nations peacekeeping.

49. The next support account must reflect a significant restructuring of all United Nations departments dealing with peacekeeping backstopping, not only the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

50. The European Union reaffirmed its strong support for the standby arrangements and their further improvement and strengthening, and welcomed the various initiatives aimed at enhancing high readiness of national or multinational units, including through increased use of the United Nations logistics base. It expressed the hope that, in accordance with the request of the Secretary-General, military expertise would be extended to the Rapidly Deployable Mission Headquarters; the need for that had been recognized by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. Reform of procurement rules and practice to shorten procurement times must complement those measures and form part of an integrated logistics strategy.

51. The European Union was gravely concerned about the increasing security threat to United Nations personnel in the field, not least to unarmed military observers and civilian personnel. The safety and security of United Nations personnel was of paramount importance in the discharge of peacekeeping mandates. In that connection, the European Union urged all States to ratify the 1994 Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel. The recently adopted Statute of the International Criminal Court covered, *inter alia*, the security needs of the personnel of United Nations peacekeeping missions, and the European Union urged States to sign and ratify the Statute as soon as possible.

52. He noted the establishment in 1998 of two new peacekeeping missions, MINURCA and UNOMSIL, which provided good examples of the new generation of United Nations peacekeeping operations and their manifold functions.

53. Peacekeeping was only one important element of a comprehensive set of policy measures to address and prevent violent conflict. The European Union was committed to a proactive policy for conflict prevention and resolution which focused on preventing the outbreak of such conflicts at an early stage, as well as on post-conflict peace-building and using the full range of policy instruments available, including development assistance.

54. The European Union supported the efforts of the United Nations and OAU to follow up the recommendations of the Special Committee on the enhancement of African peacekeeping capacities.

55. The European Union commended the efforts of the Secretary-General to strengthen cooperation in international security between the United Nations and regional organizations. In Europe, there were many instances of successful cooperation of that kind.

56. Civilian police were playing an increasingly important role in peacekeeping and peace-building, including through monitoring respect for law enforcement standards, criminal justice standards and human rights. The European Union stressed the importance of enhanced cooperation among Member States in relation to the activity of civilian police.

57. The European Union once again expressed its grave concern at the precarious financial situation of the United Nations, caused to a large extent by the non-payment of arrears, and its adverse effects, especially in the field of peacekeeping.

58. **Mr. Üğdül** (Turkey) said that Turkey considered peacekeeping operations one of the most important tools at the disposal of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security. It was prepared to continue to contribute to and diversify its presence in those operations, and it would be able to sign the memorandum of understanding determining the modalities of its contribution to the Standby Arrangements System in due time.

59. Turkey was currently taking part in four peacekeeping operations, and had also participated actively in the NATO-led operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. On its initiative, an agreement had been signed in Skopje in 1998 for the establishment of a "Multinational Peace Force in South-Eastern Europe".

60. Another initiative by Turkey was for the creation of a "Black Sea Naval Operation Task Force", with the participation of littoral countries. In addition, an international training centre of the Turkish armed forces which would provide training for peacekeeping operations had become operational in June 1998.

61. Turkey welcomed the recent initiative of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations directed towards increasing African peacekeeping activities, and was prepared to work with other Member States in exploring ways and means for enhancing Africa's peacekeeping capacity.

62. The scale of United Nations peacekeeping activities had decreased in recent years, but threats to international peace and security had not decreased commensurably. For that reason, Turkey would continue to support the strengthening of the rapid reaction capability of the United Nations. It recognized that the Rapidly Deployable Mission Headquarters could greatly enhance the capability of the United Nations to respond to conflicts in a timely manner, and looked forward to the realization of the concept. Similarly, the United Nations Standby Arrangements System should be strengthened and enhanced. It should be acknowledged that the central element of all those capabilities was the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Notwithstanding the decrease in the number of missions and the reduction of the total number of peacekeeping troops on the ground, the functions of DPKO had not declined. Moreover, because of the complexity of the operations mounted, more was expected of DPKO. In that connection, it should be stressed once again that the process of phasing out gratis personnel should not affect the Department's capabilities and its competence to cope with the new challenges it was facing, especially on the ground.

63. The strengthening of DPKO would automatically enhance the peacekeeping capabilities of the United Nations, which remained the sole global collective security organization and should not desist from its leading role in the promotion of international peace and security.

64. Turkey attached particular importance to the role of preventive diplomacy in peace-making efforts. It was not only a desirable and even ideal method of controlling and resolving conflicts but the most cost-effective way of doing so.

65. The role of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) so far in the Republic of Macedonia had proved that preventive deployment, adequately mandated and supported, could make the difference between war and peace. On the other hand, there were also lessons to be learned by the United Nations from the inability of the international community to develop an adequate response to the tragedy of Kosovo which would have prevented the escalation of warfare in that region at an early stage. As the new millennium approached, the international community was duty-bound not to allow such tragic events to recur.

66. **Mr. Lavrov** (Russian Federation) said that peacekeeping operations conducted under the auspices of the United Nations were one of the most important means available for resolving crises and ensuring global and regional stability. The Russian Federation had traditionally taken an active part in international peacekeeping efforts, and a total of about 10,000 Russian military personnel and civilian police were currently involved in various peacekeeping operations.

67. In view of the continuing active demand for peacekeeping operations and their increased scope and complexity, increasing the effectiveness of the peacekeeping arsenal of the United Nations was an important priority. The development of international peacekeeping should proceed by means of the strengthening of the basic and generally recognized principles of peacekeeping operations, including the ensuring of political direction and control of the operations by the Security Council, impartiality, the agreement of the parties and clearly defined mandates supported by adequate resources.

68. Peacekeeping operations were not an end in themselves, but an important means for achieving political settlements, and that should be clearly and unambiguously reflected in their mandates.

69. One of the most important lessons of the first multi-purpose peacekeeping operations was the need to draw a clear line between peacekeeping operations and coercive operations. The latter could be carried out only by decision of the Security Council, under its political and operational control, and only in those exceptional cases where all other means not involving the use of force had been exhausted.

70. Force must be used in an extremely responsible manner in order to ensure the safety of United Nations personnel.

71. Peacekeeping operations with a humanitarian component were increasingly coming to the fore, and raised a number of difficult political, legal and operational problems. The dangerous "interventionist reflex" could be

overcome by obtaining the consent of the host nation's Government and in relevant cases of the parties to the conflict.

72. The tendency towards increasing the proportion of the civilian component of peacekeeping operations was reflected in a more active involvement of civilian police forces in operations, which in practice promoted confidence- and security-building, prevention of the escalation and spread of conflicts and the establishment of bases for post-conflict rehabilitation. A good example was the experience of the IPTF activities in Bosnia. At the same time, civilian police functions should not be mixed with the tasks of an operation's military component, and the military should not be burdened by police functions.

73. The issue of "coalition operations" was becoming topical. The need to take careful account of the specifics of a given situation which directly influenced the choice of an optimum format for international peacekeeping efforts was becoming increasingly understood. Given the reality of the limited resources of the United Nations, the conduct of peacekeeping operations by interested States in the framework of "once-only coalitions" or multinational forces on a regional or subregional basis was justified under certain circumstances. Nevertheless, such innovations in peacekeeping practice should be completely adapted to the purposes and principles of the Charter, while corresponding multinational or coalition operations, especially those of a compulsory nature, could be conducted only with the approval of the Security Council. In essence, the creation of such coalitions or multinational forces was a matter of entering into "once-only" regional arrangements fully covered by Article 53 of the Charter. The experience of Bosnia, Albania and Haiti showed that meeting those conditions was a vital prerequisite for the success of such operations.

74. The Russian Federation consistently advocated improvement of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations under Articles 52 and 53 of Chapter VIII of the Charter, and welcomed the trend that had become evident in recent years towards expanding practical interaction in that area. Concrete parameters for such cooperation should be drawn up on the basis of the indisputability of the Security Council's primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security.

75. The interaction of the United Nations with regional organizations was of special importance to the Russian Federation in the light of the growing cooperation between the United Nations and the Commonwealth of Independent States in conflict settlement in the territory of the Commonwealth. However, the problem of the international community's financial support for peacekeeping efforts in the Commonwealth of Independent States remained acute, and the Russian Federation expected a more constructive response to the repeated appeals in that respect by the Russian Federation and its partners in the Commonwealth.

76. The need to strengthen the key role of the United Nations in peacekeeping made it important to enhance the capacity of the United Nations for rapid crisis response. The Russian Federation enthusiastically supported the efforts being made by Member States and the Secretariat to increase the efficiency of operational deployment and enhance the resource base, and was ready to accelerate practical cooperation in that respect. The most efficient means of achieving that goal remained the emerging system of standby arrangements. The Russian Federation had submitted to the Secretariat concrete proposals on its practical contribution to the Standby Arrangements System, and intended in the very near future to register its participation in that system officially and sign the related memorandum.

77. The Russian Federation, being fully aware of its responsibility as a permanent member of the Security Council, would continue to make an active practical contribution to the peacekeeping activities of the United Nations, as well as to international peace-making conducted under its auspices.

78. **Mr. Jayanama** (Thailand) said that although Thailand was not a major troop contributor to United Nations peacekeeping operations, it attached great importance to the issue, and had recently been participating more actively in United Nations peacekeeping operations. For instance, Thailand and Ireland had co-chaired the ASEAN Regional Forum Workshop on Training for United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, and on 25 September 1998 Thailand's Minister for Foreign Affairs had handed to the Secretary-General a letter indicating Thailand's readiness to join the Standby Arrangements System. Despite Thailand's difficult situation caused by the financial crisis, it would continue to support United Nations peacekeeping activities to the extent its resources permitted.

79. His delegation associated itself with the view of the representative of Jordan, who had spoken on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and noted that peacekeeping operations were increasingly being conducted in situations of intra-State conflict, were becoming more complex and sometimes included a human rights dimension. The situation became further complicated when some States perceived the Security Council to be selective in discharging its

responsibility, especially when human rights were violated. Those States did not want United Nations peacekeeping operations, which fell within the domain of the Security Council, to become involved in human rights protection, which they believed was the responsibility of other United Nations bodies. However, many intra-State conflicts and their subsequent effects on regional stability came about precisely because of human rights abuses. Accordingly, United Nations peacekeeping operations should be coordinated and conducted in close consultation with other bodies, such as the Commission on Human Rights, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, whenever they had a human rights dimension.

80. Experience in recent years suggested that a kind of "peacekeeping fatigue" had set in. The political will of members of the Security Council was vital in order to ensure that United Nations operations were deployed in a more timely manner, on a non-discriminatory basis and with full respect for the basic principles contained in paragraph 47 of the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, as well as for the principles of consent of the parties, impartiality and the non-use of force except for self-defence.

81. Mandates given for United Nations peacekeeping operations in Security Council resolutions were the outcome of negotiations among the interested parties. In a number of cases, however, the mandates were ambiguous and vague, and thus difficult for peacekeepers in the field to translate into precise, practical and implementable action.

82. In addition to political will and achievable mandates, the success of United Nations peacekeeping operations must be coupled with matching resources. It was that lack of resources resulting from the United Nations financial crisis that currently constituted another challenge for peacekeeping operations. Member States should fulfil their financial obligations to the United Nations in full, on time and without conditions.

83. Those difficulties had provided the opportunity for statements to the effect that multinational forces or a "coalition of the willing" could do better than United Nations peacekeeping operations, or that the United Nations should delegate its responsibility in that area to regional groupings. However, the United Nations had the primary role in maintaining international peace and security, as prescribed by the Charter. Regional arrangements and agencies could contribute to United Nations peacekeeping operations where appropriate, and when the mandate as well as the scope of regional arrangements and/or agencies allowed them to do so. Such cooperation must, however, take into account the particularities and unique characteristics of each regional arrangement or agency.

84. After 50 years of United Nations peacekeeping, the operations had proven themselves to be an important instrument in preserving and maintaining international peace and security. However, despite their important contribution to conflict resolution, they should be only temporary measures. Unfortunately, in some situations the United Nations peacekeeping operations or activities had become permanent features of the landscape. His delegation believed that no United Nations instrument, including peacekeeping operations, could replace the political will of parties to achieve peace.

85. **Mr. Phommahaxay** (Lao People's Democratic Republic) said that United Nations peacekeeping operations were continuing to play an important role in preventing the escalation of conflict and creating conditions for the peaceful settlement of disputes. They should not, however, be regarded as a substitute for pacific means which countries might use to settle disputes. The use of force or other collective measures for dealing with threats to peace should be undertaken only as a last resort. Notwithstanding the positive developments in peacekeeping operations in recent years, his delegation shared the concern of many Member States over the increasing trend to expand the nature and scope of such operations. Therefore, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations should continue assiduously to assess and review the question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects.

86. Given the increasing complexity and magnitude of peacekeeping operations, there was a need to take into account past lessons. For that purpose, his delegation would like to draw attention to some aspects of peacekeeping operations which it considered important. First of all, peacekeeping operations should strictly adhere to the purposes and principles of the Charter, particularly the principles of respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States, as well as non-intervention in matters that were essentially within their jurisdiction. Secondly, respect for the basic principles of peacekeeping, such as the consent of the parties, impartiality and the non-use of force except in self-defence, were essential to its success. Thirdly, peacekeeping operations should be provided with clearly defined mandates, objectives and command structures, as well as secure financing. In that regard, all Member States were encouraged to pay their contributions in full and on time, in compliance with their obligations under Article 17, paragraph 2, of the Charter.

Lastly, cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations could in certain circumstances contribute to safeguarding international peace and security.

87. The Lao People's Democratic Republic supported the development of the United Nations Standby Arrangements System, which was an important factor in the increased effectiveness and rapid deployment of troops. Any measures aimed at enhancing the rapid-deployment capability should be introduced after full discussions and consultations among Member States under the auspices of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. While welcoming the initiative of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to develop and maintain an appropriate deployment capability, his delegation observed that little progress had been made in responding to the staffing and funding elements of the Rapidly Deployable Mission Headquarters (RDMHQ). His delegation hoped that those pending issues would be adequately and expeditiously addressed and that the principle of equitable geographical distribution would be given the importance it deserved in the final selection of officers for the RDMHQ.

88. With regard to the phasing out of gratis personnel, his delegation considered that all efforts must be made to correct the existing imbalance through recruitment of personnel, both at Headquarters and in the field, on the basis of the procedures laid down in Articles 100 and 101 of the Charter.

89. Although peacekeeping operations played an important role, more attention must be given to many of the root causes of conflict such as poverty and inadequate socio-economic development. In addition, the financing of peacekeeping operations should not be at the expense of United Nations development activities.

90. **Mr. Ahmed** (Bangladesh) said that United Nations peacekeeping operations called for clearly defined mandates for accomplishing tasks that could be implemented by military forces in the course of set periods, rules for the deployment of armed forces, and an individual analysis of each situation in the field. Peace builders must abide strictly by the purposes and principles of the Charter. In addition, in the formulation and implementation of the mandates, it was essential to ensure the compatibility of the mandates, resources and objectives. In that connection, the Organization should elaborate an early-warning mechanism in order to spotlight imminent conflicts. That would not only render peacekeeping operations more effective but would also substantially reduce expenditure. Furthermore, each mission needed clear political leadership and a unified command and control structure, the effectiveness of which should be ensured by investing all levels of the mission command structure with specific functions and powers.

91. Turning to the functions and structure of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, he recalled that, in its resolution 51/239, the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to submit an in-depth evaluation and subsequent budgetary proposals that reflected the overall evolution of peacekeeping trends. He regretted that the Secretary-General's report submitted in compliance with that resolution (A/52/837), had not done justice to the hopes of Member States. Bangladesh requested the Secretary-General to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the activities of the Department in the light of the actual requirements of its field operations.

92. His delegation supported the establishment of a rapidly deployable mission headquarters at the earliest opportunity, which would significantly reduce the preparation time in deploying peacekeeping missions. In that connection, his delegation welcomed the adoption of General Assembly resolution 53/12 of 26 October 1998 authorizing the recruitment of two officers for the headquarters. It hoped that the Assembly would shortly be able to allow the Department to recruit the other six military personnel for the headquarters, and believed that the principle of geographical representation and participation by all Member States should be observed in their recruitment. His delegation was disappointed at the level of contributions to the trust fund for the headquarters. It took a positive view of the Secretary-General's proposal concerning the support account, which would, it believed, enable funds to be used flexibly to achieve the objectives set by Member States with regard to peacekeeping operations.

93. His delegation welcomed the adoption of the relevant General Assembly resolutions calling for the phasing out of all gratis personnel before the end of February 1999. In that connection, it again urged that recruitment to fill posts previously occupied by gratis personnel should be consistent with Articles 100 and 101 of the Charter of the United Nations, that it should be transparent and that it should have as wide a geographical basis as possible. In that context, his delegation noted the initiatives taken by the Secretariat to recruit military and civilian personnel to fill the vacancies in question but shared the General Assembly's disappointment that the Secretariat had, for some unexplained reason, changed the deadline for the submission of applications, which had resulted in differential treatment among Member States.

94. The Secretariat's procedure for the procurement of goods and services for peacekeeping operations needed to

be enhanced in order to make it timely, efficient, cost-effective and transparent. When a contract was awarded, the principle of public bidding should be strictly observed, and the geographical base for procurement should be enlarged. A negligible proportion of the total volume of procurement was currently obtained from the troop-contributing developing countries. Consideration should therefore be given to according preferential treatment in that regard to the developing countries, especially the least developed countries and the African countries.

95. Civilian police played an increasingly important role in peacekeeping operations by providing assistance to local police forces in restoring and maintaining civil order and in fostering civil reconciliation. Care should be taken to ensure that police and military tasks were clearly differentiated. Broader geographical representation in civilian police posts at higher levels in field missions also needed to be ensured. In that connection, his delegation stressed the importance of developing at an early date principles governing the role of civilian police personnel in United Nations peacekeeping operations.

96. His delegation fully concurred with the view that the financing of peacekeeping operations was the collective responsibility of all Members of the United Nations and was therefore concerned at the reluctance of some countries to pay their assessed contributions to the peacekeeping budget. Non-payment of such contributions had restricted the Organization's ability to reimburse troop contributors, particularly those from the least developed countries like Bangladesh. It was therefore imperative that all Member States, especially the developed ones, should pay their contributions in full, on time and without conditions in accordance with the existing scales of assessment. His delegation believed that those scales could be made permanent without delay.

97. His delegation was seriously concerned at the delay in the settlement of compensation for death and disability. Now that a uniform rate for such compensation had been adopted, the Secretariat should develop procedures for the payment of dues in a speedy manner. His delegation also viewed with deep concern the continued delays in the reimbursement of troop costs and contingent equipment leases, which had caused hardship to all troop- and equipment-contributing countries, especially the developing and least developed countries.

98. There was no need to re-emphasize the importance of the proper training of troops and civilian police personnel involved in peacekeeping operations. Although the training of such personnel was essentially the responsibility of Member States, the United Nations also had an important role to play in training both military and civilian police personnel. In that connection, his delegation reiterated the offer of his Government to provide a venue in Bangladesh for the establishment of the South Asia peacekeeping training centre.

99. Bangladesh's firm commitment to the Charter of the United Nations and to United Nations peacekeeping activities was reflected in the number of personnel from that country, both military and civilian, who had served in peacekeeping missions around the world. Bangladesh had been, and hoped to remain, a major troop-contributing Member State. Lastly, he paid tribute to all United Nations peacekeepers who had laid down their lives for the cause and glory of peace.

100. **Mrs. Escobar** (Mexico) expressed appreciation for the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, which described not only the general principles of peacekeeping operations but also the main problems faced by Members of the United Nations in the deployment and use of such operations.

101. Peacekeeping operations were undoubtedly a useful tool for the United Nations but, her delegation believed, should not be undertaken lightly. Peacekeeping operations could help restore peace in times of conflict but they were no substitute for dialogue between the parties. They should therefore be undertaken not as a rule but rather as an exception to the rule.

102. In recent years the number of United Nations peacekeeping operations mounted to settle international — and sometimes internal — conflicts had grown significantly. Experience had shown, however, that the deployment of such operations was not always the best way to resolve a problem. In her delegation's view, it was more important to eradicate the causes of conflicts than to be constantly setting up new peacekeeping operations. The resolution of social and ethnic problems, along with the establishment of mechanisms to assist the social and economic development of peoples, was therefore of prime importance.

103. Her delegation recognized the importance of ensuring the effective functioning of peacekeeping operations. To that end it would be essential to take into account the new realities of international relations and formulate clear mandates for any such operations. In addition, an operation should take place at the request and with the agreement of the interested parties; otherwise the principles of non-interference and respect for State sovereignty would be violated and the operation would be bound to fail.

104. Her delegation was concerned at the continuing practice of setting up so-called "coalitions of interested parties", allegedly on the basis of Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. It reiterated its view that principles should not be sacrificed for the sake of greater efficiency, which was why such coalitions were formed. The drive for efficiency had often led to legal standards being watered down, with dangerous consequences for the legitimacy of the Organization's activities to maintain international peace and security.

105. With regard to participation in United Nations peacekeeping activities by regional bodies, her delegation reiterated its position that such participation should be based on the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter.

106. She noted with satisfaction that the Latin American region set a good example in that regard, with each Government endeavouring to avert wars and eliminate the causes of potential conflicts. The problem was by no means easy and the support of the United Nations was essential. Her delegation hoped that the Organization would redouble its efforts to eliminate such causes of conflict. She emphasized her delegation's readiness to continue its active participation in the work of the Special Committee in that regard.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.